

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An electronic message alerting module, comprising:
 - 5 a plurality of priority alert profiles, each of said plurality of priority alert profiles associating an electronic message user with at least one telephone number; and
 - an autodialer adapted to dial said at least one telephone number associated with said electronic message user when an electronic
 - 10 message addressed to said electronic message user is received.
2. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - an alert message adapted for playback to a party
 - 15 successfully called by said autodialer.
3. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:
 - said electronic message is e-mail.
 - 20
4. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:
 - said electronic message alerting module is controlled by an associated e-mail server.
 - 25
5. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:
 - said electronic message is controlled by an associated web page based e-mail server.

6. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:

said plurality of alert profiles are managed within a database.

5

7. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 6, wherein:

said database is a relational database.

10

8. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said plurality of priority alert profiles further associating at least one electronic message sender with activation of said autodialer, and non-activation of said autodialer upon receipt of an
15 electronic message not including identification of a sender included in a relevant one of said plurality of priority alert profiles for a recipient of said electronic message.

20

9. The electronic message alerting module according to claim 8, wherein:

said electronic message is e-mail.

25

10. A method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message, comprising:

identifying a recipient of a received electronic message;
determining a telephone number for said recipient; and
dialing said determined telephone number for said recipient
of said received electronic message to alert said recipient of said received
electronic message.

30

11. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 10, wherein:

said dialing is automatically dialed without requiring user intervention.

5

12. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 11, further comprising:

playing a message relating to receipt of said electronic message if said dialing successfully establishes a telephone call.

10

13. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 10, wherein:

said electronic message is an e-mail message.

15

14. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 10, further comprising:

redialing an alternate telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message if said dialing is unsuccessful in establishing a telephone call.

20

15. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 14, wherein:

said steps of dialing and redialing are automatic without requiring user intervention.

25

16. Apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message, comprising:

means for identifying a recipient of a received electronic message;

5 means for determining a telephone number for said recipient; and

means for dialing a telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message.

10 17. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 16, wherein:

said means for dialing automatically dials said telephone number without requiring user intervention.

15 18. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 17, further comprising:

means for playing a message relating to receipt of said electronic message if said means for dialing successfully establishes a telephone call.

20

19. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 16, wherein:

said electronic message is an e-mail message.

25 20. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 16, further comprising:

means for redialing an alternate telephone number for said recipient of said received electronic message if said dialing is unsuccessful in establishing a telephone call.

30

21. The apparatus for alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 20, wherein:

5 said means for dialing and said means for redialing are automatic without requiring user intervention.

22. A method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message from a given source, comprising:

10 identifying a recipient of a received electronic message;
 identifying a source of said received electronic message;
 comparing said source of said electronic message to a predefined list of sources for which to alert said recipient by telephone;
 and

15 if said source is identified in said predefined list of sources for which to alert said recipient by telephone, dialing a telephone number for said recipient and telephonically alerting said recipient of said received electronic message from a predefined source.

23. The method of alerting a recipient of an electronic message according to claim 22, wherein:

20 said electronic message is an e-mail message.

25